

Grade 7 Overview

Focus: Taking an Active Role

I can make a difference . . .

..... *in my school.*

..... *in my community.*

..... *in my state.*

..... *in my nation.*

This unit helps students to develop skills for effective participation in their school community through problem-solving and service-learning activities.

Key Ideas:

- Taking an active role in community life helps to make the community better for everyone.
- Helping others in the community provides each of us with significant learning opportunities.
- Good citizenship is reflected in the hospitality of individuals and communities.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- take personal responsibility for obligations to family and community.
- always do their personal best.
- treat others as they would like to be treated.
- respect their parents and home.

Lessons:

1. *“I’m Bored!” (Taking an Active Role)*
2. *“What Do I Get Out of Volunteering?” (Learning Through Helping Others)*
3. *“Hoosier Hospitality”*

Culminating Activity:

Have students create a map, flow chart, or another type of graphic representation of community activities where students could take an active role. Have students work in groups to research areas in which assistance or improvements are needed. Have students prioritize their maps or charts to identify: 1) areas in which needs exist; 2) activities where students could be involved; and 3) activities which have the greatest impact upon the community as a whole. Assess students' ability to research, organize, and prioritize information about community activities. Discuss priorities and ways a service project could be initiated.

Curriculum Connections:

Activities in this unit will help students to attain academic standards in:

Social Studies (Grade 7)

Civic Ideals and Practice - Students will:

Develop a commitment to effective and responsible participation in the functioning of school and community organizations:

- participate in at least one community service project annually.
- accept responsibility for groups and individual actions in the school and community.
- provide positive leadership for at least one classroom activity or organization in the school and/or community.

Inquiry Skills - Students will:

Use relevant data from a variety of sources to formulate conclusions, make decisions, and present findings:

- interpret information in graphs, charts, maps, timelines, polls, pictures, and cartoons.
- record sources of information and develop note-taking and outlining systems.
- identify, evaluate, and use appropriate reference materials and technology.

English/LanguageArts (Grades 6-8) - Students will:

Communicate orally with people of all ages by:

- summarizing ideas and acknowledging different points of view.
- giving accurate information.
- collaborating in groups.

Grade 7 Lesson One

“I’m Bored” (Taking an Active Role)

This lesson helps students to analyze the steps needed in seeking a solution to a problem.

Key Idea:

- Taking an active role in the community is an important means of making that community better for everyone.

Key Connection to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- take personal responsibility for obligations to family and the community.

Objectives:

Students will:

- explore several areas of interest while working cooperatively toward a common goal.
- get acquainted with their community through opportunities to work with its leaders, to use its resources, and to learn its history.
- consider their own responsibility for making their community a better place.

Introductory Activities:

1. Have students generate a list of ten things that are fun to do in their community.
2. Ask students to consider the following questions: Would you say your community offers interesting or exciting experiences? Why are these things attractive to you? Do they cost much money?

Core Activities:

1. Have students brainstorm the responsibilities that individuals have to themselves and to others at home, school, and in the community.
2. Help students assess what community facilities are needed for young people and select one area of need on which to focus. Working in pairs, have students complete a problem statement, such as: “The main problem regarding community facilities for young people is” As a class, select one statement to work on.

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3. Have students prepare a class poster to highlight the four steps in approaching the problem:

A. Identify The Problem:

Example: Lack of activities for certain age groups in the community. In the poster include newspaper clippings, artwork, poems, or graphs about the selected problem.

B. Consider Alternative Solutions:

Include what is currently available in the community. Describe what actions the class might take to address the problem.

C. Choose a Solution:

Describe what the class voted to do to solve the problem. Include testimonies, artwork, interviews, and criteria used for making decisions.

D. Develop a Plan:

List the steps to be taken to accomplish the plan along with a timeline. Include resources, names of community members who can help with the project, and materials or reference sources from the community. Determine which groups of students will be responsible for developing each part of the plan.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluation should include student/teacher feedback on the completed posters as well as the quality of the proposed plan for solving the problem. Students should assist in the development of their own evaluation plan to judge the success of the project. For example, students might develop a survey to be disseminated to everyone involved asking them to rate the success of the project. Results of the survey could be tallied and developed into a chart.

Home Connection:

Parents should be informed of the purpose and activities involved in this lesson. Parents will be a tremendous asset in this project. Some parents may want to help by suggesting names of contact persons to interview or by sharing their areas of expertise or interest with the class. If the class makes a formal presentation, parents might help their children with speeches, appropriate dress, etc.

Resources:

- Contact the local police officers' or fire fighters' associations, local bar association, or other civic organizations to suggest that students might present their ideas to their association.

Grade 7 Lesson Two

What Do I Get Out Of Volunteering? (Learning Through Helping Others)

This lesson helps students identify the types of volunteer opportunities that exist in their community and explore the learning experiences involved.

Key Ideas:

- Volunteer activities provide learning opportunities for the volunteer.
- Volunteer opportunities allow students to apply classroom learning to the community setting.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- take personal responsibility for obligations to family and community.
- respect their parents and home.

Objectives:

Students will:

- discuss the benefits of volunteering.
- recognize that everyone can make a significant difference.

Introductory Activities:

1. Present students the Chinese proverb: “Give me a fish, and I will eat today. Teach me to fish, and I will eat for a lifetime.” Lead students in discussing the meaning of the proverb.
2. Discuss the question of why people would want to volunteer.
3. Help students consider the benefits of doing something without being paid.
4. Emphasize learning benefits gained by the volunteer.

Core Activities:

1. Help students use the phone book, a community resource directory, or other materials to generate a list of volunteer activities in their community.
2. Invite a community service worker or volunteer to speak to the class about his or her own learning experiences as a volunteer and the skills and training needed.
3. Help students compare and contrast the benefits of various volunteer opportunities.
4. Ask each student to make a personal selection and write down or tell about the reasons for choosing that particular opportunity.
5. Ask students to respond to the following statement: “A volunteer is a good citizen.” Do you agree? Explain.

Additional Ideas:

1. Some students might carry out a volunteer activity in the school or home setting on a personal basis.
2. The class might identify and carry out a volunteer activity in the school.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Working as individuals or in groups, students will create a graphic organizer for the class designed to show volunteer activities in the community and the functions they serve. Maps, webs, charts, or graphs might be included. Evaluate graphic representations on the basis of the following criteria: 1) evidence of research; 2) information provided is complete and accurate; and 3) the relationship among ideas/concepts is clear.

Home Connection:

Parents should be informed of the purposes and activities involved in this lesson. Some students might ask family members about:

- volunteer opportunities they have experienced.
- skills and training that were important.
- ways the experience proved beneficial.
- future volunteer opportunities they would suggest.

Students can experience the benefits of helping others by volunteering for a special project to help out at home.

Resources:

- Volunteer bureaus
- Local coordinating councils
- Local Chamber of Commerce

Grade 7 Lesson Three

Hoosier Hospitality

This lesson demonstrates that individuals can exhibit “Hoosier Hospitality” by practicing courteous, hospitable behavior on a daily basis.

Key Idea:

- Good citizenship is reflected in the hospitality of individuals, communities, states, and nations.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- treat others the way they would like to be treated.
- always do their personal best.

Objectives:

Students will:

- be able to compare and contrast good citizenship in Indiana with good citizenship in other states according to specific characteristics.
- explore attributes of what is considered good citizenship in different regions, states, or countries.

Introductory Activity:

Ask students to stand if they have always lived in Indiana or if they have always lived in their present community. Of those sitting, identify those who have moved from another community or who have come to Indiana from other regions, states or countries. Form groups of two or three students to complete the discussion worksheet.

Core Activities:

After groups have completed the worksheet, discuss by using the following questions:

1. Has anyone experienced “Hoosier Hospitality”? What did that consist of and how did you feel? Share some examples.
2. Did those who have moved to Indiana experience “Hoosier Hospitality”? How? In what ways? Give some examples.

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3. Review the main characteristics of “Hoosier Hospitality.” List these characteristics in categories.
 4. Do good citizens in Indiana have characteristics different from good citizens in other states? How could we find out?
 5. Is state pride linked to good citizenship in Indiana? Why or why not?
 6. What are acts of hospitality and courtesy that individuals can practice every day?
Examples: using polite greetings, such as “Good morning”; using words like “please” and “thank you”; welcoming visitors to the class; practicing courteous behavior on the phone, in stores, and other community settings.

Additional Ideas:

Some students might develop a plan for extending “Hoosier Hospitality” to new students to the class or to the school. A plan might be developed for the entire seventh grade class to welcome the incoming sixth grade class to the school.

Evaluation/Assessment:

1. Have students imagine what it would be like to move to a new place. Develop a list of ways they would like to be treated by others in their new community.
2. Working as individuals or in small groups, have students plan and carry out an opportunity to demonstrate an act of hospitality for the school or a community organization. Activities might include: preparing invitations to a school event, serving as greeters and ushers during the event, or delivering the Pledge of Allegiance. After the activity, have students consider the following questions: “In what way was I being a good citizen as I helped with this project?” “What are two or three important things I learned as a result?”

Home Connection:

Keep parents informed of the purpose and activities involved in this lesson. Some students might ask their parents what they feel are the characteristics of a good citizen. Have their parents ever felt or experienced “Hoosier Hospitality”? Students can practice hospitable, courteous behavior at home.

Resources:

- Handout: “Hoosier Hospitality Discussion Worksheet”
- Local Chambers of Commerce may have information on the points of pride for each community.

Handout

Hoosier Hospitality

Discussion Worksheet

1. Have you ever experienced Hoosier Hospitality?
2. How would you describe Hoosier Hospitality?
3. Do good citizens in Indiana have different characteristics from good citizens in other states?

Why or why not?

4. Do good citizens in Indiana have different characteristics from good citizens in other nations?

Why or why not?

